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## Tornado!

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# "TORNADO!"

Tornadoes can happen in Indiana at any place and at any time, but more likely from March through September and in the afternoon or evening hours. They usually strike during warm, humid days in spring or early summer, accompanying severe thunderstorms. Indiana averages 23 tornadoes a year on 11 days.

A tornado **WATCH** is an early announcement of tornado possibilities in some portion of the state. This is the time to be alert, to plan, to watch the skies and to listen for a warning.

A **WARNING** follows if a tornado is sighted or is indicated by weather radar. The area or counties ahead of the tornado are given that warning. If you are in the affected area, watch the skies for severe thunderstorms, and take shelter before high winds strike.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

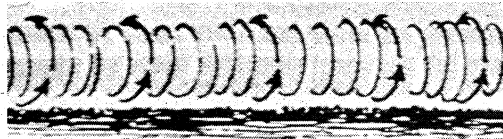
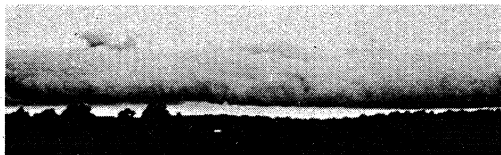
## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The threat of tornadoes increases as thunderstorms approach. Watch for dangling, rotating funnel- or rope-shaped dark clouds. Most dark, low-hanging clouds are not tornadic, especially when the cloud walls are ragged, rather than rotating or smooth like a spinning top (see other side).

A tornado sounds like a group of roaring airplanes or trains. The path of damage varies from a few yards to half a mile wide. In Indiana, most tornadoes come from the west, northwest or southwest, and may skip along the ground for many miles at 30 to 50 mph.

A tornadic-type cloud that does not touch the ground is called a **funnel cloud**.





**No. Approaching roll-type squall cloud; windy but not tornadic.**

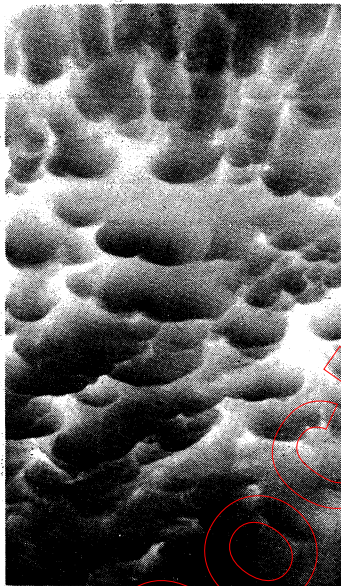


**No. Dense, low-hanging, ragged cloud mass; not tornadic but bears watching.**

### IS IT TORNADIC?

Unusual or threatening cloud masses often trigger an undue fear of tornadoes. The formations shown here all indicate unsettled atmospheric conditions; but only one is tornadic.

**No. Mammatus clouds associated with severe thunderstorms.**



**No. Trailing precipitation (virga) from a rain cloud.**



**Yes. The real thing!**

### KEEPING POSTED

Know the alarm system used in your area as organized by police and civil defense. Within 40 miles of Indianapolis, a continuous weather broadcast can be heard on 162.55 megahertz. The same service is expected to become operational in the near future at South Bend, Ft. Wayne and Evansville.

### WHAT TO DO!

Here's what to do at home, at school or at work in event of a tornado. It would be wise to memorize these proper actions.

#### AT HOME

Go to the basement, storm cellar, cave or underground excavation. If you have no basement, choose an inside closet or lie flat in an interior hallway. If this is not possible, lie under heavy furniture, protecting head and eyes with your hands. If time permits, open windows on the east side of the house to relieve inside air pressure; then, stay away from all windows.

#### MOBILE HOME

Move to a storm shelter of some kind. Even strong thunderstorm winds can overturn mobile homes unless secured with cables anchored in concrete footings. If there is no shelter nearby, leave the mobile home park for a low, protected spot below ground level.

#### SCHOOL

Follow advance plans to an interior hallway on the lowest floor. If the building is not of reinforced concrete construction, go to a nearby one that is, or take cover outside in the best protected area below ground level, such as a ditch or culvert. Stay out of auditoriums, gymnasiums or other areas having wide expanses of unsupported roof. School buses should not be dispatched under a tornado "warning."

#### OFFICE BUILDING

Go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor or to the designated shelter area.

#### SHOPPING CENTER

Go to a designated shelter, not to your parked car.

#### OPEN COUNTRY

Face the tornado to determine the direction it's headed. If moving to the right, you travel left to escape, and vice versa. If no change is detected, assume it's headed directly toward you, particularly if looking toward the western horizon. If there is no time to escape, lie flat in the nearest depression, ditch or culvert, covering your head with your hands. Don't stay in a car or bus on the highway.